

MENNONITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN

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Daniel Kauffman as a Mennonite Historian

HAROLD S. BENDER

Next to John Horsch and C. Henry Smith, Daniel Kauffman wrote more books on Mennonite history than any other American Mennonite of his generation. His writing was not generally the result of original research, for he lacked training in this field, but he was deeply interested in history, had a sound historical consciousness, and rendered valuable service as a collector and popularizer. The factors which led to his interest in history are not known to the present writer, but no doubt his years of experience as a teacher and administrator in the public schools of Missouri played a part.

Daniel Kauffman's first and most original contribution to Mennonite history writing was his share in the book known as *Mennonite Church History* (422 pages) whose joint authors were J. S. Hartzler and Daniel Kauffman, which was published in 1905 by the Mennonite Book and Tract Society of Scottdale, Pa. This was the first substantial Mennonite History in English and held the field for some years. C. Henry Smith's *The Mennonites, A Brief History* not appearing until fifteen years later, in 1920. It had a wide sale and must have been found in almost every Mennonite home forty years ago. Originally four men joined forces to prepare this book, A. D. Wenger and A. B. Kolb dropping out before the work was completed.

From information given to the writer by the surviving author, J. S. Hartzler, Daniel Kauffman was not only the leading spirit in the production of the book but also the author of a large share of it himself. He was responsible for the extensive section on the history of the American Mennonite conferences and activities, including the schisms, and did considerable original research in collecting this material, gathering information by letter, questionnaire, and personal interviews. J. S. Hartzler wrote the history of the Indiana-Michigan conferences, and L. J. Heatwole of the Virginia conference, but Kauffman did all the rest of this part of the book. Most of the material was

gathered in 1902-3. A great deal of valuable information has been preserved in this section, which is still of basic importance to the historian, even though slight errors have been discovered. Kauffman's attitude in what he wrote is on the whole fair and sympathetic. He was careful to try to "speak the truth in love," whether in his treatment of Amish and Mennonites, or of other difficult topics. Nevertheless he had decided convictions and did not hesitate to express them.

Daniel Kauffman's historical interest apparently was displaced by other inter-



Daniel Kauffman, 1865-1944

ests during the following twenty years, for it was not until 1927 that he produced another book in this field. This time it was a brief *Mennonite History* of 147 pages, written as the result of teaching a course in this subject at the Hesston College Winter Bible School of that year, and designed primarily for such classes and for popular home use. The actual Mennonite historical material in this slender volume is small,—eighteen pages on Europe, eighty pages on America. The most valuable portion is that containing biographies of American Mennonite leaders. The ones printed were chosen from a series of biographies en-

(turn to p. 3, col. 1)

The Federal Census of 1860

MELVIN GINGERICH

Beginning in 1790, the United States government has taken a census every ten years. Down through the years, the census has become increasingly complex so that now much information besides the number of people in the country is collected.

To illustrate some of the uses that can be made of the census in the study of Mennonite history let us use the Federal Census of 1860 for two Amish Mennonite communities in Iowa.

By 1860, according to the census, there were over forty-five Amish families in the community near the present towns of Kalona and Wellman, Iowa, while there were a few less than twenty families in the area near the present town of Wayland. The census does not say they were Amish but one familiar with the family names of these communities has no difficulty in selecting them from the larger population of the county.

Sometimes, however, the surname may be "Miller" or a similar name that can be found in many nationalities and creeds. The next test is to study the first names of members of the family, since the 1860 Census lists the wife's name and the children's names. If these names are all or nearly all Bible names, the chances are that this was an Amish Mennonite or Mennonite family.

The most common Christian names for the fathers in the Kalona community in 1860 were John (8), Joseph (6), Daniel (3), and Jacob (4). Other Bible names included Isaac, Peter, Seth, Moses, David, Noah, Joel, and Benjamin. A few names not Biblical such as Henry and Christian were common also. Not so common were William, George, and Frederick.

Occasionally all the children but one carried Bible names. Note this list: Simon, Joseph, Mary, John, and Laura. Or this list: Mary, Daniel, Joel, Solomon, George, and Anna. It would be interesting to compare a list of several hundred Amish Mennonite given names of 1860 with a similar number of names today. Is it true that there is a general trend away from these names? If so,

when did the trend begin? Is there any relationship between these names and the degree of secularization of our communities?

Another interesting study can be made of the ages of the people in these communities. In 1860 the average age of the heads of families in the Kalona-Wellman community was 41. Now the average age of the married men in two of the Amish Mennonite churches of the community is 47. The average age of the heads of families in the Wayland community in 1860 was 42. In 1944 it is almost 42.

Is it true that our western communities were made up of younger people than the ones from which they came in the eastern states? It is often contended that the eastern Amish and Mennonite churches are more conservative than those in the west. Was the age level a factor in bringing about a difference in the observing of customs and traditions? This subject would be an interesting topic for a term paper in one of our church schools.

Is it true that economic failure and discontent was a cause of much of the Amish westward migration? If so, one would expect to find many renters among these Iowa Amish of 1860. Practically all of them, however, were landowners, having in their possession, on an average, land and personal property worth from \$1000 to \$5000. These figures from the Census could be compared with the worth of property held by their brethren of a similar age in the Pennsylvania settlements of 1860.

Another interesting study that could be made is one comparing the average ages of several thousand Amish and Mennonites in 1860 to a similar number in 1944. The figures above indicate that the average Amish Mennonite in Iowa today is an older man than his average brother of 1860. It is generally held that as people grow older they become more conservative. Can we expect our churches to become more conservative too? Older people often lose the energy, zeal, and drive they had in youth. Does that mean the church will slow down in its program of launching into new activities and into new mission fields?

From what states did the people come who built up the Iowa Amish Mennonite communities? It is often assumed they came from Pennsylvania but that question can be answered quite definitely by turning to the Census of 1860. In it we find the record of every Iowan's birthplace. If the father was born in Germany the older children in Pennsylvania, and the younger ones in Ohio, we can trace the family's route to Iowa.

The records show that in 1860 those in the Kalona-Wellman community were born in the following places: Iowa (76), Ohio (73), Pennsylvania (59), Germany (39), Maryland (27), Indiana (15), France (3), Canada (2), Switzerland (1), and on shipboard (1).

NEWS & NOTES

The Historical Committee of Mennonite General Conference (which also publishes this BULLETIN) was instrumental in the establishment of the official Archives of the Mennonite Church, which were opened in 1940 in the then newly completed library of Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana. The Committee was also able to raise some funds toward the cost of the building that shelters the archives at Goshen. The total of \$3,560.54 was received from congregations, Sunday schools, and individuals for this purpose during the two years, 1939-1941. Also the Mennonite Publication Board donated to the Committee the sum of \$500.00 which was used for the purchase of equipment for the archives quarters.

Harold S. Bender, secretary of the Historical Committee has written a book on the life and work of Conrad Grebel. This work will be published in the near future, and it will be an authoritative work on this early leader among the Swiss Brethren in Zurich, Switzerland.

Robert Friedmann still continues his studies in the field of early devotional literature used by Mennonites, and what its significance was for Mennonite faith and life. His latest published article appeared in the *Mennonite Quarterly Review* for October, 1943, under the title: "Mennonite Prayer Books, Their Story and Their Meaning."

Those living in the Wayland community in 1860 came from different backgrounds than those in the community named above. They were born in the following places: Germany (41), Iowa (29), France (18), Ohio (16), New York (6), Indiana (3), Switzerland (2), Canada (2), and Pennsylvania (1). Of this group over 51 per cent were born in Europe. Only 14 per cent of those in the Kalona-Wellman community were born abroad.

This study of backgrounds may point to another factor influential in making western communities less conservative than eastern ones. The Amish in Iowa, coming from many backgrounds, soon discovered that there were variations in their customs and practices. These variations often produced conflicts that resulted in compromises and in the dropping of time-honored practices.

This process of compromise on customs which one would expect to go on within a community that has a variety of backgrounds would not necessarily bring about common practices in two communities as widely separated as the Kalona and Wayland communities. These two Iowa Amish Mennonite communities, thirty miles apart, had a certain degree of religious fellowship but there was not a complete understanding between them.

A New Appraisal of John Horsch's *Mennonites in Europe*

RICHARD WENGER

It seems characteristically human to form opinions, opinions concerning anything about us. The human intelligence, quite naturally, attempts to evaluate and regiment natural phenomena. They are essential to the adjustment of the individual. Unless due care is exercised, opinions may all too often be formed on the faulty basis of inadequate information. Subsequent realization of factual information quite often necessitates complete rearrangement and reformulation of the concepts previously held.

This element of reconstruction of impressions and understanding was one of the outstanding reactions in my reading of John Horsch's book. Coupled with this was a feeling of mild surprise and intensified interest. This presentation of the story of the Mennonites produced the rather new feeling of attaching a real value to the somewhat trite expression, "Mennonite heritage." Furthermore, the book places the theology and doctrine of the Mennonites in what I believe is the correct perspective, that of pre-eminence over the more publicized "oddities" in some members. It dispels once and for all the concept of Mennonites as unprogressive, rigid fanatics. Instead there is presented the contributions made by the group to the theological and social environment of the times he reviews.

The method of analysis and presentation is quite satisfactory. Horsch presents the account of the genesis and development of the principles now crystallized in the Mennonite tradition, from the times of the early church to the present time. Three divisions of the book present, first, the positions of dissenting groups in the early church in the light of their possible significance as roots of the Anabaptists; second, the story of the Mennonites and relevant groups; and finally, a section devoted to the various distinctive beliefs of the Mennonite and Anabaptist groups. He presents quite clearly the spirit of the time of the Reformation, which marked the beginning of Anabaptism. The formal and open declaration of dissenting principles was facilitated by the broken power of the orthodox church. Horsch traces, in detail, the Anabaptist deviation from the Reformed and Lutheran theology, particularly on the questions of baptism, participation in war, and of the state church organization. The word "deviation" may be a misnomer, since it seems that the Anabaptist position was the rectilinear projection of Christ's teaching, regardless of considerations of expediency rather than the inhibited and

partially distorted form of the state church type.

Another impression received is the contrast between the solidly built faith and practice of those who place the ideal above the practical, and the inevitable weakening produced by compromise and the unwillingness to sacrifice.

The treatment of the material is probably as fair as can be secured from a Mennonite historian. In cases of conflicting opinions, naturally the author would accept the Mennonite account rather than that of opponents. This, I believe, is a fundamentally correct procedure. Yet, at times, there appears an almost visible straining to justify and enhance the Mennonite position. The more radical groups and those leaders who tended toward excess are pictured as deviations and as not at all characteristic of the Mennonites. The picture is that of the Mennonite as bearing the pure version of Christianity, whereas other groups, for various reasons, have wandered from their original position. Whether this is true is not the point in question. The point is that a more unbiased presentation and some admission of inadequacies, with the final judgment left in the hands of the reader, might offer a greater appeal from the historical standpoint alone.

The effect of the book in producing a heightened sense of the worth and solidarity of Mennonite principles and background makes it, with other like volumes, an effective factor in fusing Mennonite ideals into a common theme. In spite of somewhat difficult language in places, the detailed and accurate, yet sympathetic presentation makes it a valuable contribution not alone to Mennonite circles, but to the entire Christian world.

The book was designed as a companion to a forthcoming volume by H. S. Bender on the Mennonites in America. It was the opinion of the Mennonite General Conference some years ago that such a historical work was opportune and necessary, accordingly its Historical Committee commissioned the production of the two volumes.

DANIEL KAUFFMAN

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titled "Fifty Mennonite Leaders" published about this time in the *Gospel Herald*, not all written by Kauffman himself. This series in the *Herald* was one of Kauffman's most valuable contributions to Mennonite history, for it not only collected and preserved important information but aroused much interest. As an editor Brother Kauffman was always friendly to church history and encouraged the publication of articles by others.

The greatest work in the field of Mennonite history by Daniel Kauffman was his *Mennonite Cyclopedic Dictionary*, published at Scottdale in 1937, a volume of 443 pages in large size with two columns of small print. The title page reads, "Mennonite Cyclopedic Dictionary, A Compendium of the Doctrines, History, Activities, Literature and Environments of the Mennonite Church, Especially in America, Edited by Daniel Kauffman assisted by Many Brethren." The title accurately tells the story. The articles are brief, popular, often superficial, sometimes inaccurate, but on the whole represent a remarkable accomplishment for a man of Kauffman's limited training and research experience, and his age (past seventy at the time). It is a very useful popular reference book and has found a deservedly wide sale. Many of the European articles were written by John Horsch, and a few by other writers, but none are signed. The editor gives generous recognition to the many who assisted in the work, but he actually wrote the large majority of the American articles. The book is a pioneer in its field in English and should be followed either by a new and revised edition or by a larger work like the *Mennonitisches Lexikon*, begun by Mennonite scholars in Germany in 1913 and published as far as the letter M before the outbreak of the present war.

The last historical work by Daniel Kauffman was his *Fifty Years in the Mennonite Church, 1890-1940*, published at Scottdale in 1940 as a small volume of 92 pages. The title suggests an autobiography, but the author states specifically that it is not intended to be such. Containing little about Daniel Kauffman, it is rather a review of modern Mennonite history as seen through the eyes of the author as a chief actor. The development of the various activities and organizations of the church is summarized in an interesting discussion (pp. 13-68). Much of interest and importance is reported, although at times one could wish for a deeper penetration into the forces at work which created the surface results reported.

One other book by Kauffman contains some historical material, namely, *The Mennonite Church and Current Issues*, published in 1923 in an attempt to meet the threat of schism which faced the church in several places about that time, particularly in Indiana and Ohio in connection with the closing of Goshen College in June, 1923. The following chapters in this book contain historical material: "Progress During the Past Half Century" (pp. 81-84); "Our Publication Interests" (pp. 108-112); "Church and School" (pp. 116-126).

In Daniel Kauffman the Mennonite Church did not have a major historian, but nevertheless one who under his limitations and in his own way, gave a real and much appreciated service.

Music in the Amish Church

Comparison to the Plain Song of the Early Christian Church

MARY OYER

Music in an Amish church service has a primitive feeling, a spirit far removed from the secular surroundings of today. Theirs is the music which the Swiss Brethren used in the sixteenth century in Europe, and the hymns sung to this music were finally collected into one book, the *Ausbund*. While these songs were being formulated Palestrina (1526-1594) was the foremost church musician (born the year after the founding of the Mennonite Church), offering to the Catholic Church a wealth of music for worship, and composing some of the very first part music which is at all pleasing to the present day musical ear. But the Swiss Brethren did not adopt this important innovation. In fact, even today in the Amish Church part singing is still unheard of. The leader begins and the congregation joins him in unison. Their music reflects rather the plain song or chant of the early Christian church.

The early plain song was characterized by a general lack of rhythm with no regularly accented notes. The notes were held long, in fact just as long as the singer deemed necessary. The musical scale was diatonic—moving by whole and half tones—and there were no wide skips or leaps in the melody. It proceeded by steps, giving a feeling of peaceful assurance as opposed to the colorful variety obtained by chromatic intervals. There was a comparatively great amount of freedom of interpretation. "From time to time melismatic embellishments of the melody were added which give it added intensity, as if the simple melodic line could not sufficiently express the emotional fervor of the words." (*Music In History*, p. 118.)

Amish hymns show some similarity to the plain song. The lack of rhythm is the most apparent. The leader determines the length of the notes. Amish hymns, like the plain song or chant, are related to the natural speaking voice with its inflections; for the intervals are small and quite peaceful in effect. Here, too, those of the congregation who care to, may improvise embellishments to the melody.

The plain song and the hymns of the Amish differ somewhat in mode. The plain song still retained much of the Greek modal system using different modes for the idea or mode desired. The Amish caught some of the spirit of development and secularization, enough to make the key center apparent. The subject matter of the hymns, too, is of a different nature. The chant has to do with the carrying out of the mass, dealing with Christ's passion or songs of praise; while the Amish, although they also have praise hymns, often give long-

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

The Old Order Amish of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. By CALVIN GEORGE BACHMAN. Published in Proceedings of the Pennsylvania German Society. Volume XLIX, pages 1-297 with table of contents and foreward.

Here at last we have a complete and sympathetic account of the Old Order Amish, written by one who, although "on the outside," has had opportunity to observe them intimately and who because he is their neighbor writes of them with sympathy and understanding. Bachman is a Reformed minister whose broad knowledge of church history, sociology, and the German language enables him to evaluate and interpret what he has observed.

Bachman's article (it is in reality a book) takes up first "Amish Origins" under the headings, "The Anabaptists," "Menno Simons," "The Meidung Controversy," "The Amish Division," and "The Amish in America." The bulk of the volume, pages 61-294, treats in detail the Old Order Amish of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

He covers the matter so thoroughly that one is tempted to list the separate sections of the volume. Let it suffice to say that he discusses in detail all phases of Amish life—their worship, their homes, their folkways, their attitudes toward the outside world, toward education, toward the state, and toward practically every phase of the complex social, political, and economic life that threatens the simplicity and the piety of their cultural pattern. Characteristic chapter headings are: "Amish Means of Travel," "Church Organization," "Services of Worship," "The Lord's Supper," "Admission to the Church," "Amish Weddings," "Amish Funerals," "Amish Cemeteries," "Amish Youth," "Relief of Poverty," "Mutual Aid," and others.

The chapter on the Lord's Supper is an outstanding example of Bachman's thoroughness. For the "meaning" of the

drawn-out accounts of martyrdom, dissertations on Christian doctrine or similar themes.

In spite of the differences between the Amish hymn and the plain song, the similarities are so clear that one must conclude that the Amish have inherited some of the songs sung by the early Christian church over one thousand years ago.

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communion service, he studies the *Dordrecht Confession* and the *Ernsthafte Christenpflicht*. He has conducted interviews with ministers and to all of this he adds quotations from the *Ausbund*. As already mentioned, he has the necessary theological training to interpret what he sees and hears. He brings into his discussion of the Amish Communion the *Didache* or *The Teachings of the Twelve Apostles*, which he says was written in the first part of the second century.

One might point out a few cases where his study has led him into fruitless speculation. A case in point is his discussion of the refusal of the Amish to be photographed. He strains a point when he seeks to base this refusal on superstition rather than on religious scruples. He quotes, for instance, from J. G. Frazer's "Taboo and the Perils of the Soul": "It is a German superstition that if you have your portrait painted, you will die." Bachman certainly is in error when he suggests that "really somewhere in the discussion which Frazer suggests we must look for the real reason for this superstition." The Amish explanation however is the obvious, simple one: the Bible forbids the making of an image and the Amish interpret this literally as they do other passages of Scripture.

But, in spite of a few unwarranted digressions of this type, Bachman has made a valuable contribution to the study and interpretation of Amish life and culture. Eighteen well-chosen illustrations and a brief but useful index add to the value and usefulness of the work. To the date of its publication (1941) it was the most complete and exhaustive study of all phases of Amish life. The study of Walter M. Kollmorgen, published by the U. S. Department of Agriculture in 1942 under the title *The Old Order Amish of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania*, gives additional material on the economic life of the Amish.—John Umble.

Historical Committee Meets

The Historical Committee of Mennonite General Conference met for its biennial meeting at Scottsdale, Pennsylvania, on March 4, 1944, as guests of the Mennonite Publishing House. All members of the committee were present for this meeting, excepting S. F. Coffman of Vineland, Ontario. In forenoon and afternoon sessions the committee transacted its necessary business. The same persons who had served as officers for the Committee during the preceding biennium were re-elected for the coming two years. They are as follows: Chairman, S. F. Coffman; secretary, H. S. Bender; treasurer, Edward Yoder. John C. Wenger and Edward Yoder were continued as the editors of the *MENNONITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN* for the next two years. Future issues of the *BULLETIN* will bring to you further reports on the work that the Historical Committee is carrying on, as also announcement of some activities that are projected for the immediate future.

New Members of the Association

A number of new members have been added to the Mennonite Historical Association, which is sponsored by the Historical Committee. The following persons have paid membership dues since the last previous report, given in the September, 1943, issue of the *BULLETIN*: Martin R. Kraybill, Rt. 1, Elizabethtown, Pa.; John E. Lapp, Hatfield, Pa.; Floyd E. Kauffman, Rt. 4, Minot, N. Dak.; Arthur W. Nafziger, Hopedale, Ill.; Leo Burkett, 1422 S. 41st St., Kansas City, Kansas. We heartily welcome all these into the Association and as regular supporters of the work of the Historical Committee.

Sustaining Members for 1943

The Historical Committee is highly grateful for the generous support given to it by eight members of the Mennonite Historical Association, who each contributed the sustaining membership fee for the year 1943. These Sustaining Members deserve to be honored with due recognition for their valuable contribution to the support of the Committee's work. Those who contributed the five dollars sustaining membership fee for 1943 are: C. Warren Long, Mahlon A. Souder, Samuel S. Wenger, Orrie O. Miller, C. L. Graber, Ira D. Landis, C. Z. Mast, Edward Yoder. These, and others who may be able to do so, are invited to contribute five dollars for a sustaining membership in 1944.

Membership Dues for 1944

These are due to be paid now. A few have already paid their dues for this year. The treasurer will be happy to receive your remittance, in case you have not already paid it, at an early date. Consider this to be your statement of dues for 1944. Remember the regular membership fee is one dollar for the year, and that a contribution of five dollars entitles you to be recognized as a Sustaining Member of the Mennonite Historical Association for the year. Send your membership contribution for 1944 at once to the treasurer, Edward Yoder, Scottsdale, Pennsylvania.

New Members Are Solicited

In case you are not yet a member of the Mennonite Historical Association but have received copies of the *MENNONITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN* and have enjoyed reading them, we cordially invite you to take this opportunity to become a regular supporter of the Association which publishes this *BULLETIN*. Send one dollar as your membership fee for 1944. Should you wish to make a contribution of five dollars for the year, we will welcome you as a Sustaining Member of the Association for this year. All who are members of the Association receive the *Bulletin* regularly sent to their own address. Send your membership fee to the treasurer, Edward Yoder, Scottsdale, Pa. Do it now, before the matter is overlooked or forgotten.

